

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council

held in Leusdon Memorial Hall on

Thursday 6 March 2025 at 7.30pm

Members present: Councillor Y Elliott (Chair), J Bibby, D Edwards and C Partridge

Also attending: District Cllr/Ashburton Postmaster Rogers, PC Hurrell and PCSO Campbell-Mosley

Members of the Public: Three

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

5093 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr S Raynor
- Cllr T Guest
- District Cllr J Nutley
- District Cllr J Major
- Rob Steemson (DNPA)

5094 OPEN FORUM

A resident had been informed that the contractor repairing potholes recently in Widecombe had come all the way from Barnstaple which does not seem to make any financial sense.

5095 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Members were reminded of their responsibility to continually update their Notice of Registerable Interests and invited to state whether they have any interest in the items to be discussed during this meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Unforeseen requests for a Dispensation to be considered at this point only if there was no way a Councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

5096 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes Parish Council held on 6 February 2025 which were approved as a true and

correct record.

5097 REPORTS

(a) **County Councillor**

None

(b) **District Councillors**

Cllr Rogers advised that he is currently working on a way of accessing untapped CIL money to improve the play area equipment in Widecombe. He is hoping to get agreement in principle before 'purdah' kicks in.

The new 'Ring and Ride' service will be announced before the end of March. Volunteer drivers and admin staff are needed.

The Household Support Fund is still open. If residents don't have access to a computer, they can call TDC on 01626 361101 and ask to speak to someone for help and advice. Residents can also ask in the post-van and Cllr Rogers will arrange for an officer to contact them.

He is awaiting further information and updates about the future of the public toilets and will keep the Council informed.

If any pockets of land can be identified in the parish for housing, they may qualify as an exception site. Landowners should contact Cllr Rogers if they have suitable land they wish to be considered.

He urged residents to continue to report potholes.

Library books can be ordered to the post-van to be delivered on Mondays. Library membership also gives people access to magazines and newspapers.

(c) DNPA Representative

No report.

(d) Police Report

In the period 1 – 28 February 2025, there was 1 criminal offence recorded for this area: 1 x theft of a kayak left by the roadside. There were 17 non-crime incidents across the area which mainly included firearms licensing and road-related incidents.

Rural crime is increasing so residents are to be encouraged to make their property as secure as they can and report all crimes to the police.

(e) Delegate Reports

No report.

5098 PROJECTS & ESTATES

(Cllrs Raynor & Partridge)

(a) Parish Field

(i) There was no change to income and expenditure for the Parish Field.

(ii) No applications have been received for the grazing of the Parish Field. Cllr Bibby offered to speak to a previous tenant to see if they would be interested again. She advised that no events are planned for the orchard this year and therefore it is unlikely that anyone grazing animals will be asked to remove them.

(b) Teignbridge District Council-owned bench in the car park

It was noted that TDC has not yet made safe the bench located at the entrance to the main car park. The offer of an old metal bench has been made to the Parish Council, but it was agreed

that the bench in question cannot be replaced by a new metal bench because it is built into the wall.

After discussion, it was agreed that, as TDC is not able to fund repairs to existing benches, the Projects and Estates team would obtain prices to purchase and fit new timber.

It was agreed that there was sufficient seating around the green but the parish churches may be interested in TDC's offer of a metal bench. It was agreed to let the churches know.

(c) **Horse chestnut sapling**

Members received an update on the sapling being grown on behalf of the Parish Council which is now 3 feet tall. It was agreed that the gentleman growing it should be invited to plant the tree in the Parish Field in early autumn. Planting it in the Parish Field rather than on the green will offer it more protection and give the sapling the best chance of surviving.

5099 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Cllrs Bibby, Guest & Edwards)

- **New planning applications/appeals:**
- 0053/25 – Lower Dunstone Farm, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Installation of package treatment plant to replace a septic tank

Members agreed to support this application.

- 0057/25 – Land to the East of Higher Tor Farm, South of lane to Tor Farm, Poundsgate

Erection of an agricultural building with landscaping works to facilitate the use of the site for horticulture and permaculture

Members agreed to support this application.

(b) **Planning Decisions/Withdrawals**

- (i) 0011/25 – Shop on the Green, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Change of use from part business/part

Members noted that DNPA has refused this application.

(c) **Other**

Members noted that there was a site inspection in respect of 0210/24 – Challamoor Field, Buckland-in-the-Moor (telecommunications tower) on 21 February 2025 which Cllr Bibby attended on behalf of the Parish Council. This will be discussed by DNPA's Development Management Committee on 7 March; it is recommended for approval.

5100 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(Cllrs Bibby, Guest & Edwards)

(a) **Payments**

Members approved the following payments:

- Clerk’s salary & disbursements – £287.37
- Leusdon Memorial Hall – hire of hall for 3 meetings – £54
- S Raynor – Reimbursement for Road Warden Scheme equipment – £374.92
- D Thomas – Reimbursement for Road Warden Scheme equipment – £470.10

5101 HIGHWAYS

Potholes and other highways maintenance issues can be reported direct to DCC:

Online: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

Telephone: 0345 155 1004

Email: customer@devon.gov.uk

- Road Warden Scheme – the equipment has now been purchased and there is a meeting tomorrow at 6.30pm for volunteers at which they will decide which roads to prioritise.
- It was noted that many of the new directional signs have been replaced.

5102 CORRESPONDENCE

None

5103 MEMBERS’ ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR GENERAL DISCUSSION, FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS AND/OR ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

Members are reminded that they have not received the statutory notice of this business to be transacted and should therefore recognise that any decision made may be taken to be unlawful if challenged in the future

Cllr Partridge wondered whether there is anything that can be done to put Widecombe on the map again as tourism has dropped over recent years. It was suggested that businesses might be approached to see whether there is an appetite for increasing tourism and how this might be achieved.

The format of the Annual Parish Meeting will be discussed next month.

5104 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 3 April 2025 in Church House Inn, Widecombe.

Signed Dated